

Demographic Differences in Internet Access Among C&P Claimants

Findings from the 2003 Survey of Veterans Satisfaction with
the VA Compensation and Pension Claims Process



Surveys and Research Staff
Office of Performance Analysis and Integrity
Veterans Benefits Administration

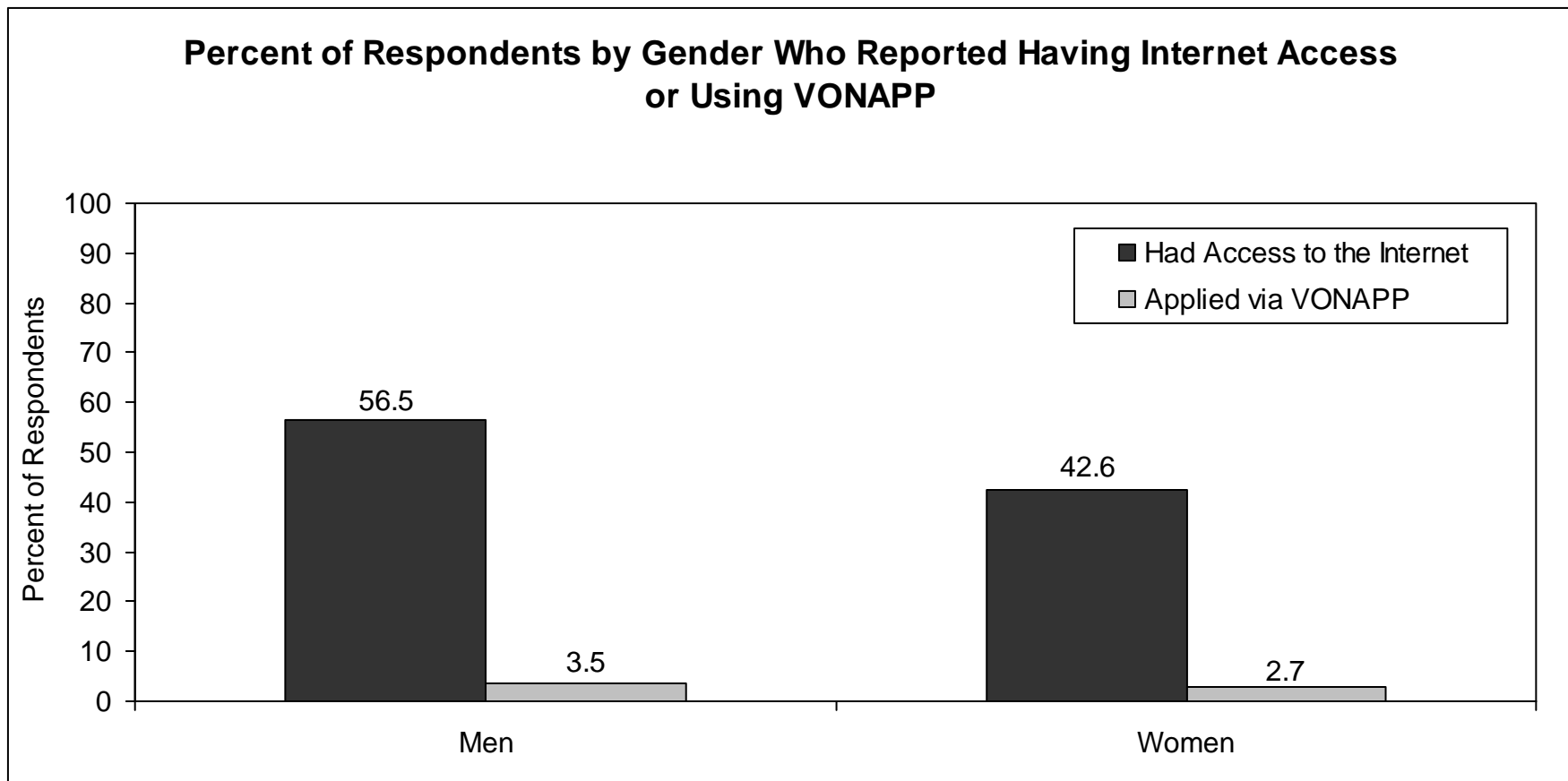
Prepared by Ronda Britt
November 2004

Introduction

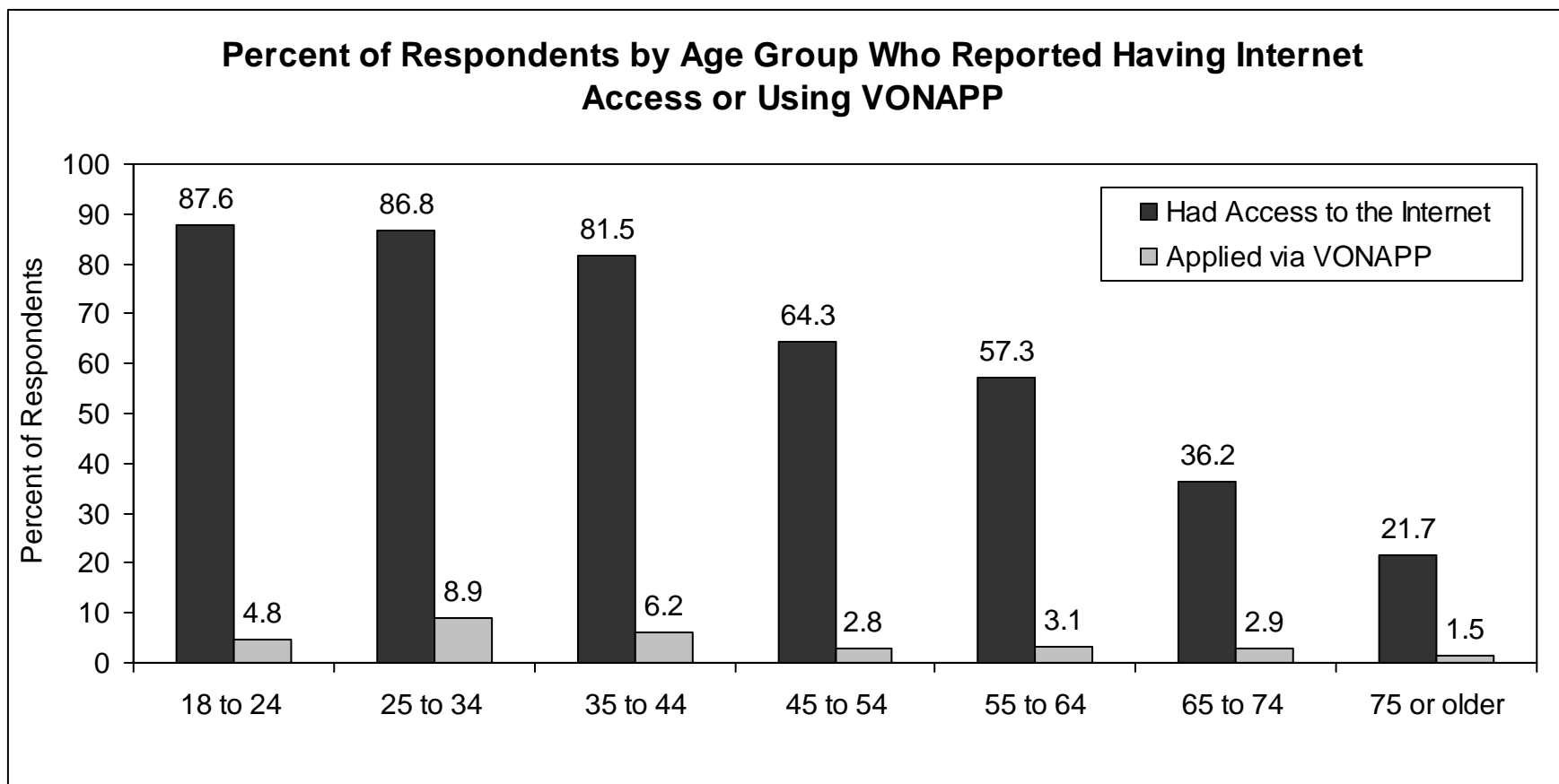
The following charts present data from the 2003 “Survey of Veterans Satisfaction with the VA Compensation and Pension (C&P) Benefits Claims Process.” The survey asks several demographic questions along with questions on service issues, among them whether the respondent has access to the Internet. The survey also asks if the respondent filed their claim by paper application or via C&P’s online application form, VONAPP. This report examines the differences in Internet access and VONAPP usage when comparing certain demographic groups.

Although VONAPP usage is uniformly low and does not vary by much among any group, the charts show that there were many significant differences in Internet access among the groups. For example, older respondents were much less likely than younger respondents to report having access to the Internet, and men were more likely to have access than women. The report looks at differences by gender, age, educational level, type of claim, and type of respondent.

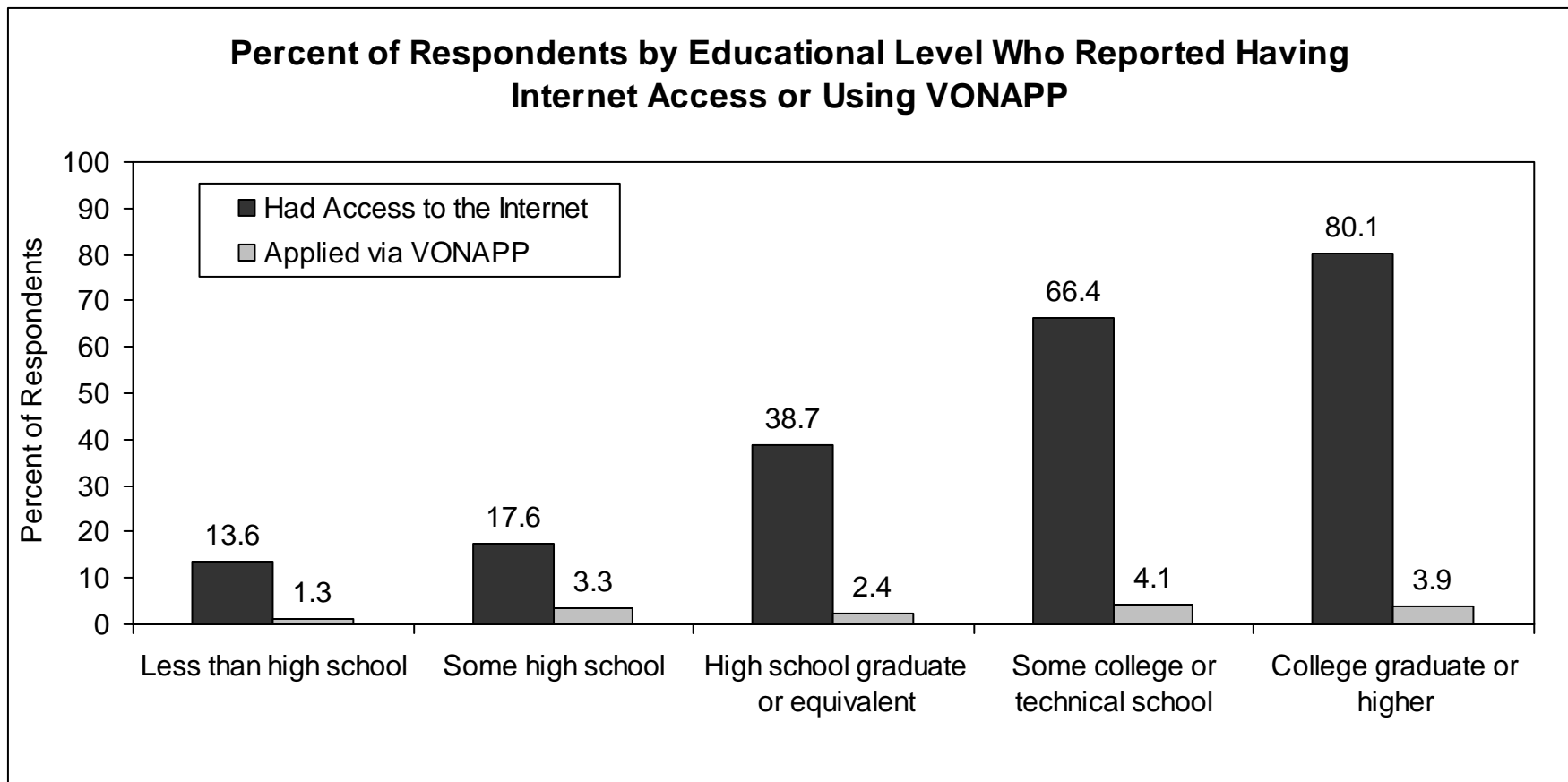
A similar study was done in September 2004 using variables from the 2003 “Survey of Veterans Satisfaction with the VA Education Benefits Claims Process.” Because all of the GI Bill beneficiaries attend college or technical school and are thus much more likely to have Internet access provided to them, that study focused instead on the demographic differences in the likelihood of using the www.gibill.va.gov resources.



Men were more likely to report having Internet access (56.5 percent) than women (42.6 percent). They were also slightly more likely to have applied for their claim via VONAPP (3.5 percent) than women (2.7 percent).

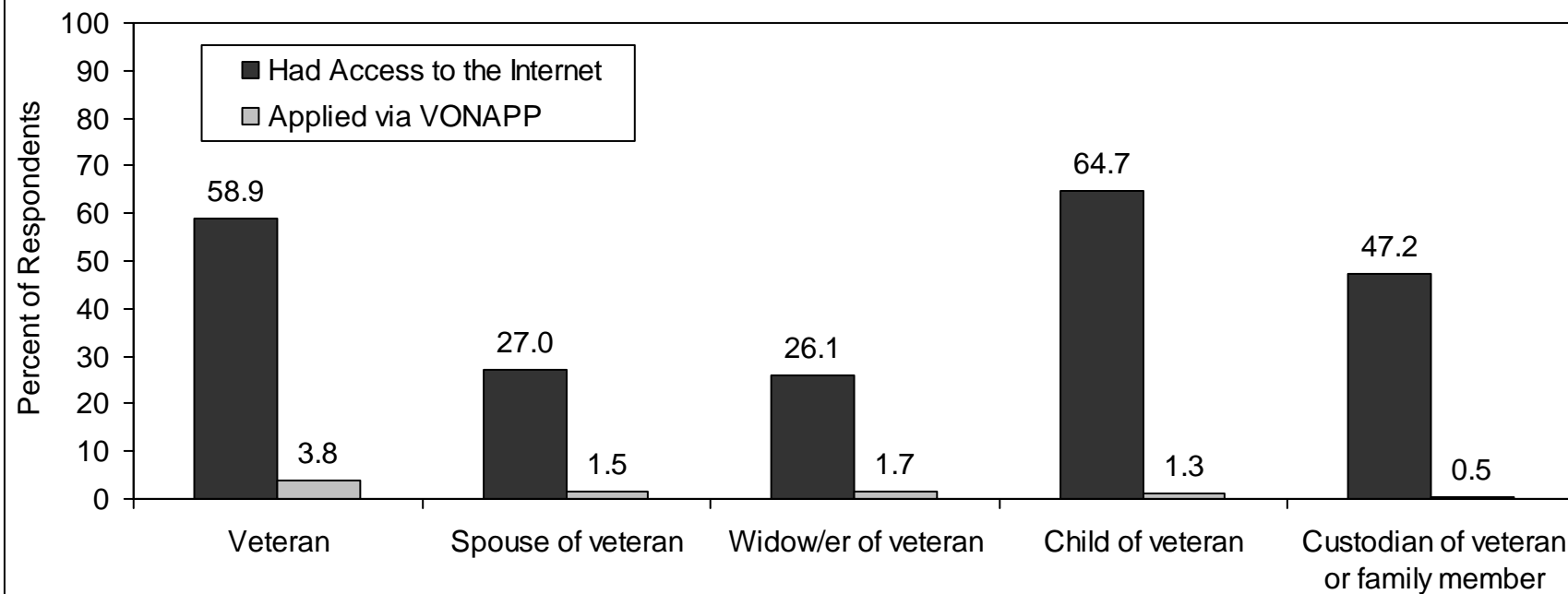


There is an inverse relationship between the age of the respondent and their likelihood of having Internet access: as age increases, the likelihood declines. Over 80 percent of those 18 to 44 years of age reported having Internet access, compared with roughly a third or less of those over 65 years of age. Respondents between the ages of 25 to 34 were the most likely to have applied for their claim through VONAPP (8.9 percent), with those aged 35 to 44 the second most likely (6.2 percent).

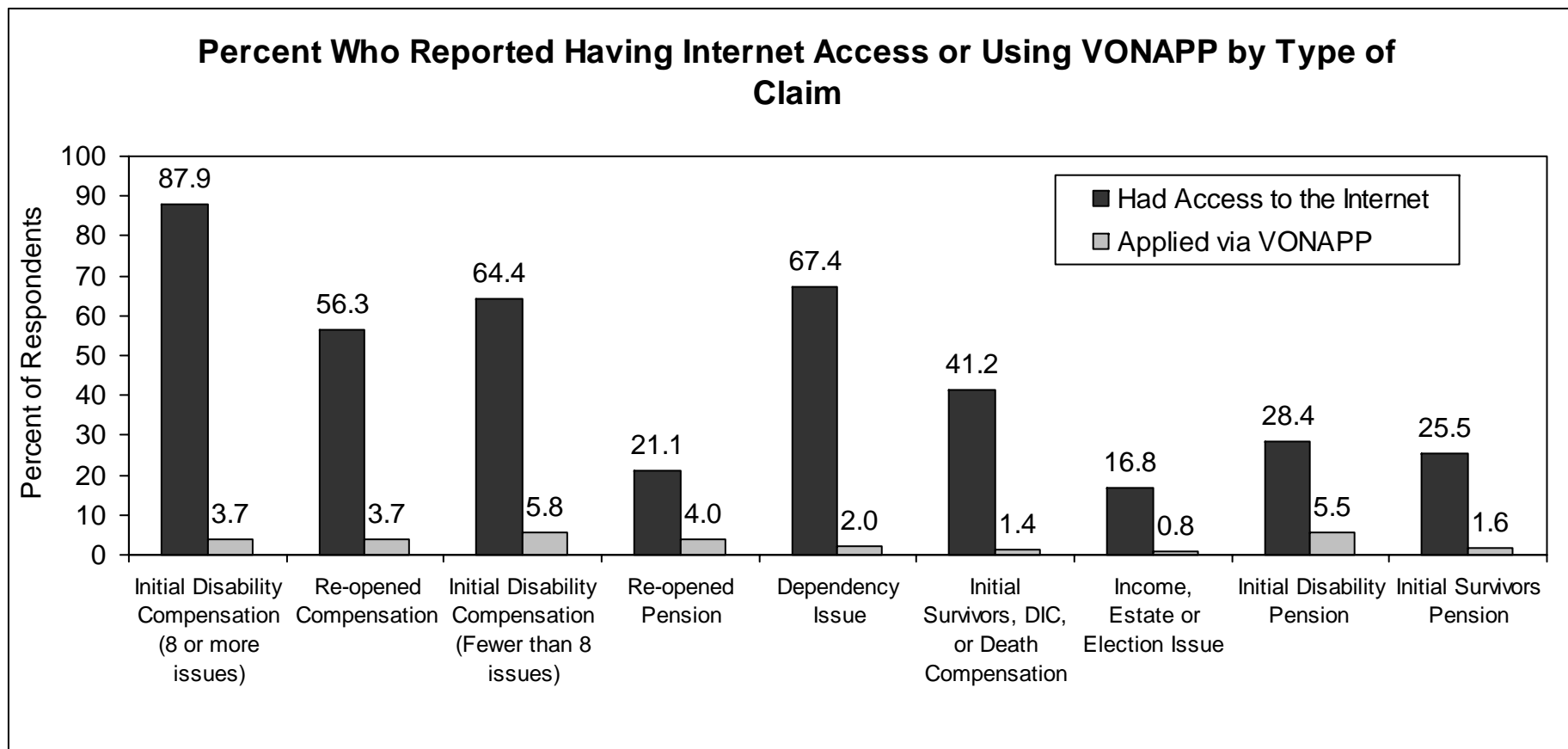


There is a direct relationship between the educational level of the respondent and their likelihood of having Internet access: as the respondent's educational level increases, the likelihood of Internet access also increases. However, there is not a strong relationship between educational level and the likelihood of filing a claim using VONAPP, as the total range between groups is only 2.8 percent.

Percent Who Reported Having Internet Access or Using VONAPP by Type of Claimant



Veterans' children who filed claims were the most likely to report having access to the Internet (64.7 percent), and veterans themselves were the second most likely (58.9 percent). Veterans were also slightly more likely than any other type of claimant to file using VONAPP (3.8 percent).



Respondents with Initial Disability Compensation claims with 8 or more issues were the most likely to have access to the Internet (87.9 percent). Those with Initial Disability Compensation claims with fewer than 8 issues and those with Initial Disability Pension claims were the most likely to file a claim through VONAPP (5.8 percent and 5.5 percent respectively).